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ADA American Dental Association

The Bureau of Economic and Behavioral Research

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The 1987 Survey of Dental Practice

Patient Visits to the Dentist

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PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST FOR THE YEAR 1986

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HIGHLIGHTS

* For independent dentists, the mean weekly total patient visits excluding those with hygienists appointments only (scheduled visits, walk-ins, plus emergency visits) was 63.8. Independent general practitioners treated 58.5, and independent specialists treated an average of 94.5 per week.

* For independent dentists, the mean weekly total patient visits (including hygienist visits, scheduled visits, walk-ins, plus emergency visits) was 79.4. Independent general practitioners treated 75.4, and independent specialists treated an average of 103.2 per week.

* For all dentists, 6.5% of scheduled weekly appointments (including those primarily for hygiene treatment) were no-shows.

* For all dentists, the average number of emergency visits per week was 4.5, with general practitioners seeing 4.4, and specialists 5.4 per week.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides descriptive statistics from the 1987 Survey of Dental Practice on patient visits to private practitioners in the U.S. for the year 1986. Areas examined are scheduled appointments, total number of visits, no-shows, walk-ins, and emergency visits. Visits including hygienist appointments are summarized separately from those not including hygienist appointments. Dentists were asked to respond to the survey regarding patient care that they personally provided in 1986.

Data for weekly and yearly visits are provided. Please note that yearly data is obtained by multiplying weekly figures by the number of weeks worked per year.

Tables are presented separately for all dentists (all private practitioners), independent (owner) dentists, solo dentists, and independent dentists graduating since 1980. The tables contain detailed data broken down by general practitioner and specialist status for each of the four categories.

ALL DENTISTS

The average number of total patient visits per week for all dentists, including hygienist visits, was 78.9. This figure includes scheduled visits plus walk-ins and emergency visits. Excluding hygienist visits, the mean number of total patient visits per week was 63.2.

For all dentists, there were about 2.5 patient walk-in visits and 4.5 emergency visits per week. Including hygienist visits, the mean number of patient no-shows was 5.0 per week; excluding hygienist visits, 3.8 per week. Excluding hygienist visits, the average number of total patient visits per week for a general practitioner was 58.0. For a specialist, the number was 95.0.

Annually, excluding hygienist visits, the total number of patient visits for all dentists was 2992.2. The mean for general practitioners was 2759.8 and 4399.1 for specialists. Including hygienist visits, the annual figures are 3741.8 total patient visits for all dentists; general practitioners reported 3559.2 and specialists reported 4841.9.

For all dentists, no-shows accounted for a loss of 6.6% of yearly scheduled appointments.

The average number of emergency visits per year for all dentists is 214.6. General practitioners treated 208.9, while specialists saw 248.7 emergencies annually.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

ALL DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	72.4	1671	103.4	524	76.9	2195
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	1732	2.3	541	2.5	2273
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.4	1733	5.4	541	4.5	2274
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	67.7	1643	96.7	513	71.9	2156
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	74.7	1624	104.3	501	78.9	2125
NO-SHOWS	4.7	1643	7.0	513	5.0	2156

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	54.1	1742	93.2	550	59.8	2292
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	1732	2.3	541	2.5	2273
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.4	1733	5.4	541	4.5	2274
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	50.9	1721	87.5	538	56.2	2259
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	58.0	1701	95.0	524	63.2	2225
NO-SHOWS	3.4	1721	6.2	538	3.8	2259

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST — ALL DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3444.7	1671	4769.7	521	3635.0	2192
WALK-IN VISITS	119.3	1732	105.8	541	117.3	2273
EMERGENCY VISITS	208.9	1733	248.7	541	214.6	2274
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3225.8	1643	4492.1	513	3407.9	2156
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3559.2	1624	4841.9	501	3741.8	2125
NO-SHOWS	223.8	1643	328.6	513	238.8	2156

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2577.8	1742	4319.3	550	2830.7	2292
WALK-IN VISITS	119.3	1732	105.8	541	117.3	2273
EMERGENCY VISITS	208.9	1733	248.7	541	214.6	2274
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2425.6	1721	4056.6	538	2660.4	2259
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2759.8	1701	4399.1	524	2992.9	2225
NO-SHOWS	161.6	1721	287.7	538	179.7	2259

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

INDEPENDENTS, SOLOS, AND INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980: Overview

In general, the figures for independent and solo dentists do not differ greatly from the averages for all dentists presented earlier. As indicated in the following table, only the independent dentists graduating since 1980 show a marked difference from the "all dentists" mean in the number of patients treated per week.

Mean Number of Total Patient Visits Per Week (Scheduled Visits Plus Walk-Ins and Emergency Visits) NOT Including Hygienist Visits, 1986

	Patient Visits		
	All	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	63.2	58.0	95.0
Independent Dentists	63.8	58.5	94.5
Solo Dentists	61.6	57.1	89.8
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	56.8	56.4	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1987 Survey of Dental Practice.

Independent dentists graduating since 1980 saw, on average, 6.4 fewer patients per week than the "all dentist" category.

The following table presents the number of no-shows as a percentage of scheduled visits for each of the four categories.

*The number of cases is too small to ensure statistically significant results.

Mean "No-Shows" as a Percentage
of Scheduled Visits Per Week
Including Hygienist Visits, 1986

	All	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	6.5	6.5	6.8
Independent Dentists	6.3	6.4	6.1
Solo Dentists	5.9	5.9	5.7
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	10.5	10.7	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1987 Survey of Dental Practice.

For all dentists, the overall loss of weekly scheduled appointments due to no-shows was 6.5%. This figure is higher for independent dentists graduating since 1980.

On average, all dentists saw 4.5 patients on an emergency basis per week in 1986. Specialists saw slightly more, 5.4, while general practitioners saw 4.4 emergency patients per week. The following table presents the average number of emergency visits per week for all dentists, independent dentists, solo dentists and independent dentists graduating since 1980.

*The number of cases is too small to ensure statistically significant results.

Mean Emergency Visits Per Week, 1986

	All	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	4.5	4.4	5.4
Independent Dentists	4.5	4.3	5.3
Solo Dentists	4.1	4.1	4.1
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	4.7	4.7	*

Source: American Dental Association, 1987 Survey of Dental Practice.

The following tables present information for independent dentists, solo dentists, and independent dentists graduating since 1980 about patient visits, both including and excluding hygienist appointments.

*The number of cases is too small to ensure statistically significant results.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST — INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	73.2	1565	101.7	509	77.4	2074
WALK-IN VISITS	2.4	1603	2.2	520	2.4	2123
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.3	1602	5.3	520	4.5	2122
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	68.5	1538	95.9	498	72.6	2036
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	75.4	1522	103.2	486	79.4	2008
NO-SHOWS	4.7	1538	6.2	498	4.9	2036

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	54.7	1610	92.3	528	60.3	2138
WALK-IN VISITS	2.4	1603	2.2	520	2.4	2123
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.3	1602	5.3	520	4.5	2122
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	51.6	1590	87.3	516	56.9	2106
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	58.5	1573	94.5	503	63.8	2076
NO-SHOWS	3.4	1590	5.4	516	3.7	2106

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	87.9	912	112.8	109	89.4	1021
WALK-IN VISITS	2.2	939	0.8	124	2.1	1063
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.7	939	3.6	124	4.6	1063
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	81.8	896	103.9	108	83.1	1004
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	88.5	889	108.0	108	89.7	997
NO-SHOWS	6.0	896	7.2	108	6.0	1004

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST — INDEPENDENT DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3481.3	1565	4687.0	506	3659.9	2071
WALK-IN VISITS	116.0	1603	103.1	520	114.1	2123
EMERGENCY VISITS	204.5	1602	245.5	520	210.6	2122
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3264.3	1538	4448.3	498	3440.0	2036
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3589.7	1522	4789.1	486	3765.5	2008
NO-SHOWS	223.2	1538	288.3	498	232.8	2036

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2606.1	1610	4268.8	528	2855.4	2138
WALK-IN VISITS	116.0	1603	103.1	520	114.1	2123
EMERGENCY VISITS	204.5	1602	245.5	520	210.6	2122
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2456.7	1590	4043.4	516	2692.5	2106
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2782.7	1573	4375.3	503	3016.5	2076
NO-SHOWS	160.4	1590	250.4	516	173.7	2106

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	4185.2	912	5160.6	106	4242.6	1018
WALK-IN VISITS	103.5	939	35.2	124	99.0	1063
EMERGENCY VISITS	221.2	939	165.0	124	217.5	1063
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3900.1	896	4870.3	108	3959.1	1004
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	4221.5	889	5062.0	108	4273.1	997
NO-SHOWS	285.6	896	337.8	108	288.8	1004

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST — SOLO DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	72.6	1213	99.6	361	76.3	1574
WALK-IN VISITS	2.2	1234	1.7	369	2.2	1603
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.1	1236	4.1	370	4.1	1606
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	68.5	1192	94.0	354	72.0	1546
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	75.0	1178	99.1	345	78.3	1523
NO-SHOWS	4.3	1192	5.7	354	4.5	1546

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	53.2	1243	89.2	375	58.2	1618
WALK-IN VISITS	2.2	1234	1.7	369	2.2	1603
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.1	1236	4.1	370	4.1	1606
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	50.6	1226	84.8	368	55.4	1594
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	57.1	1211	89.8	359	61.6	1570
NO-SHOWS	2.9	1226	4.9	368	3.2	1594

SOURCE: AMEICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENTS VISITS TO THE DENTIST

SOLO DENTISTS
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	90.2	659	115.4	78	91.7	737
WALK-IN VISITS	2.0	672	0.8	90	1.9	762
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.6	675	3.5	90	4.5	765
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	84.4	649	106.0	77	85.7	726
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	91.1	644	109.8	77	92.2	721
NO-SHOWS	5.7	649	7.0	77	5.8	726

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST — SOLO DENTISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3463.9	1213	4584.8	358	3617.5	1571
WALK-IN VISITS	106.9	1234	77.7	369	102.8	1603
EMERGENCY VISITS	196.4	1236	189.7	370	195.4	1606
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3272.3	1192	4374.9	354	3424.2	1546
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3585.8	1178	4608.8	345	3725.0	1523
NO-SHOWS	207.2	1192	267.2	354	215.4	1546

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2538.6	1243	4137.1	375	2761.8	1618
WALK-IN VISITS	106.9	1234	77.7	369	102.8	1603
EMERGENCY VISITS	196.4	1236	189.7	370	195.4	1606
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2414.2	1226	3937.7	368	2626.0	1594
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2723.8	1211	4162.8	359	2921.7	1570
NO-SHOWS	137.6	1226	226.3	368	150.0	1594

SOURCE: AMEICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

SOLO DENTISTS
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	4310.3	659	5247.3	75	4364.3	734
WALK-IN VISITS	96.5	672	34.4	90	92.4	762
EMERGENCY VISITS	218.8	675	160.7	90	214.9	765
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	4046.2	649	4983.6	77	4102.5	726
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	4364.3	644	5164.3	77	4412.7	721
NO-SHOWS	274.5	649	328.1	77	277.7	726

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	67.2	174	77.9	16	67.7	190
WALK-IN VISITS	2.8	178	1.1	16	2.8	194
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.7	179	3.8	16	4.7	195
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	59.8	173	75.9	14	60.5	187
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	67.4	173	81.3	14	68.0	187
NO-SHOWS	7.2	173	4.6	14	7.1	187

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	54.7	179	62.4	16	55.0	195
WALK-IN VISITS	2.8	178	1.1	16	2.8	194
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.7	179	3.8	16	4.7	195
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	48.8	179	60.4	14	49.2	193
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	56.4	178	65.9	14	56.8	192
NO-SHOWS	5.9	179	2.4	14	5.8	193

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	84.8	84	166.0	3	86.3	87
WALK-IN VISITS	1.9	87	1.0	3	1.8	90
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.7	87	2.7	3	4.7	90
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	73.0	83	148.8	3	74.4	86
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	79.6	83	152.4	3	80.9	86
NO-SHOWS	11.5	83	17.2	3	11.6	86

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3280.4	174	3738.9	16	3302.0	190
WALK-IN VISITS	139.9	178	51.9	16	135.8	194
EMERGENCY VISITS	232.4	179	187.7	16	230.4	195
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2927.1	173	3680.9	14	2958.6	187
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3301.5	173	3949.1	14	3328.5	187
NO-SHOWS	346.7	173	219.3	14	341.4	187

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2669.7	179	3004.9	16	2685.1	195
WALK-IN VISITS	139.9	178	51.9	16	135.8	194
EMERGENCY VISITS	232.4	179	187.7	16	230.4	195
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2382.9	179	2949.1	14	2405.8	193
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2759.3	178	3217.4	14	2777.9	192
NO-SHOWS	286.7	179	112.1	14	279.7	193

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
GRADUATING SINCE 1980
EMPLOYING HYGIENISTS

MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1986

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	4117.9	84	7878.0	3	4188.8	87
WALK-IN VISITS	91.0	87	47.7	3	90.2	90
EMERGENCY VISITS	228.6	87	126.3	3	226.7	90
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3558.5	83	7061.3	3	3625.3	86
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3879.3	83	7235.3	3	3943.4	86
NO-SHOWS	556.0	83	816.7	3	560.9	86

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The 1987 Survey of Dental Practice (SDP) was a condensed version of the long-form 1985 SDP. This short-form of the survey was sent to 4% of the dentists who were known to be actively engaged in the private practice of dentistry.

Sampling

The population consisted of 134,678 dentists who, based on the 1982 Distribution of Dentists, were known to be in private practice, even if only part-time.

The Distribution of Dentists is a dental census that is conducted periodically by the American Dental Association. Although the 1982 distribution is the most recent complete census, the sampling frame is updated by adding information about recent graduations, retirements, and deaths when available. Dentists with an unknown practice type were included in the sampling frame.

The sample was ordered by type of practice - general practitioner or specialist. Within each type, the sample was sorted by dental school and graduation year. A random sample from each type of practice was selected. Since specialists comprise a small percentage of the dental population it was necessary to oversample them to ensure adequate numbers for statistical analysis (i.e., the proportion of specialists sampled is higher than the actual percentage of specialists in the total population). It should be noted that the sample was drawn in such a way as to make statements about general practitioners and specialists as a whole. For any given specialty we may not have enough dentists responding to make reliable statements about that individual specialty.

Data Collection

The 1987 SDP was initially mailed in April 1987. Two follow-up mailings to non-respondents occurred in May and June 1987. A telephone follow-up to nonrespondents was conducted in July and August 1987. Coding, hand-editing, and computer processing were completed in September 1987. The final response rate was computed after the individuals who were either retired, disabled, deceased, not in private practice, or had unknown addresses were eliminated from the sample. The adjusted sample size was used to calculate the final response rate of 57.5%.

Weighting the Sample

Since the proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual percentage in the dental population, it is necessary to account for this imbalance when making statements about the total dental population. The correction is accomplished by developing and applying a weighting factor to each sampled dentist.

Weights were calculated for general practitioners and specialists separately, by dividing the percentage of each in the population by the percentage in the sample. The assumed proportion of general practitioners in the population is 85%, specialists, 15%. The percentage of general practitioners in the sample is 75.3%, specialists, 24.7%.

The weights were computed as follows:

General Practitioner	.85/.753 = 1.128818
Specialists	.15/.247 = 0.607287

These weights were employed in the calculations of means and medians for cases in which general practitioners and specialists were combined (i.e., when statements were made about "all" solo or independent dentists). The weights were also used when percentages of dentists in various categories were computed. The totals as well as the percentages are weighted, making the totals smaller or larger than those for the actual sample.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions of several terms and phrases are provided in this section to assist with the interpretation of data contained in the tables in this and other reports. In general, the dentists included in this report were working in private practice as a primary occupation. In addition, all dentists had started in their current (i.e., 1987) practice prior to 1986.

All Dentists: This group of dentists contains all dentists responding to the survey, including those who are employed by a dentist or dental practice.

Dental Practice Personnel (All Staff): This group includes dental hygienists, chairside assistants, dental laboratory technicians, secretary/receptionists, bookkeepers and other office personnel. Dentists employed by the practice are **NOT** included.

Full-Time and Part-Time: For purposes of this report, full-time was defined as working in the practice at least 32 hours per week. Part-time was defined as working in the practice less than 32 hours per week.

Hourly Salary: The hourly salary reported is computed by dividing the weekly salary by the number of hours worked.

Independent Dentists: All dentists who own or share in the ownership of a dental practice are independent dentists. This ownership status includes sole proprietorship, partnership and shareholders in an incorporated practice.

Mean: This is the simple average of values reported by the dentists responding to the survey. The mean is calculated by summing the values reported and then dividing the sum by the number of dentists reporting values.

Mean Per Year: This represents the average value reported for a year's period of time (e.g., mean number of appointments per year). The per year figures were determined by multiplying the per week values by the number of weeks worked that year.

Nonowner Dentists (Employed): This group includes all dentists who work in a dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage or associate basis.

Nonsolo Dentists: Nonsolo dentists work in a dental practice with at least one other dentist. Some of these dentists may be employed by the owner dentists in the practice.

Patient No-Shows: The total of patient no-shows is defined as the difference between the number of appointments scheduled and the number of scheduled visits treated. It was assumed that the number of scheduled visits treated is equal to or less than the number of appointments scheduled.

Regions: The following is a breakdown of the states in each region.

New England: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
Middle Atlantic: NJ, NY, PA
East North Central: IL, IN, MI, OH, WI
West North Central: IA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD
South Atlantic: DE, MD, DC, FL, GA, NC, SC, VA, WV
East South Central: AL, KY, MS, TN
West South Central: AR, LA, OK, TX
Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY
Pacific: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA

Scheduled Visits Treated: Scheduled appointments that were kept by the patients.

Solo Dentists: All dentists who work in private practice with no other dentists are solos. A solo dentist is also a sole proprietor or the only shareholder in an incorporated practice.

Total Patient Visits: Total patients visits is the sum of walk-in visits, emergency visits, and scheduled visits treated.

Weighting: Since specialists comprise a smaller percentage of the dental population, it was necessary to oversample them to insure adequate numbers for statistical analysis. The proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual proportion of specialists in the total population of dentists. Please note that individual specialties were not oversampled, and, therefore, only statistics on specialists as a group are presented. Statistics computed for All Dentists were weighted to reflect national proportions.

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1987 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

Please answer all questions by **circling** the number corresponding to the most appropriate response, except where a fill in the blank is requested.

1. Which of the following **best** describes your primary and/or secondary occupation(s) during 1986? Please circle **one** response for **EACH** column.)

	Primary Occupation	Secondary Occupation
a. Private practice (full- or part-time)	00	00
b. Dental school faculty/staff member	01	01
c. Armed Forces	02	02
d. Other federal services (e.g., VA, PHS)	03	03
e. State or local government employed	04	04
f. Hospital staff dentist	05	05
g. Intern/resident	06	06
h. Other student	07	07
i. Other health/dental organization staff member (e.g., NIDR)	08	08
j. Not in practice/retired	09	09
k. Occupation unrelated to dentistry	10	10
l. **NO SECONDARY OCCUPATION**	—	11

Please complete the remainder of this questionnaire if you were in **PRIVATE PRACTICE** during **ANY PART** of 1986 as:

1. a **PRIMARY** occupation, **OR**
2. a **SECONDARY** occupation, **OR**
3. both a **PRIMARY** and **SECONDARY** occupation.

If you were **NOT INVOLVED** in the **PRIVATE PRACTICE** of dentistry during any part of 1986 please **RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.** Thank you.

INDIVIDUAL DENTIST QUESTIONS

The following questions pertain to you as an individual private practitioner. If you changed practices (i.e., worked in more than one **PRIMARY** practice during 1986), please give information on the practice in which you treated patients for the greatest number of months.

2. Are you currently **ANNOUNCING** yourself and practicing as a specialist in an ADA recognized specialty area (dental public health, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral pathology, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, or prosthodontics)?

Yes 1
No 2

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
3. In what year did you **FIRST** become associated with the primary/secondary practice where you practiced during 1986?	19 ____	19 ____

4. Which **ONE** of the following **BEST** describes your employment status when you **FIRST** became associated with that practice?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice	1	1
b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership	2	2
c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice	3	3
d. Employed by an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder	4	4
e. Employed by an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis	5	5
f. Independent contractor	6	6
g. Other, please specify _____		

5. Which **ONE** of the following **BEST** describes your employment status in the practice(s) during 1986?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice	1	1
b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership	2	2
c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice	3	3
d. Employed in an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder	4	4
e. Employed in an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis	5	5
f. Independent contractor	6	6
g. Other, please specify _____		

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
6. What was the zip code of your practice(s) during 1986?	_____	_____
	zip code	

7. Please indicate the following regarding patient care that **YOU PERSONALLY** provided during 1986?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
The average number of:		
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____	_____
	appointments per week	
b. **WALK-IN VISITS** per week that **YOU** treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled.) (If none, enter zero.)	_____	_____
	visits per week	
c. **EMERGENCY VISITS** per week that **YOU** treated (i.e., no appointment scheduled.) (If none, enter zero.)	_____	_____
	visits per week	
d. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that **YOU ACTUALLY** treated (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only	_____	_____
	visits per week	

8. Please answer the following about the time **YOU PERSONALLY** spent in the practice(s) during 1986.

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Total number of weeks worked (excluding vacation)	_____	_____
	weeks	
b. Total number of **HOURS PER WEEK** spent in the practice	_____	_____
	hours per week	
c. Number of hours per week spent **TREATING PATIENTS** in the practice	_____	_____
	hours per week	

9. What was **YOUR** 1986 net income (after practice expenses and business taxes) from: (Please include salary, commission and/or dividends.)

	Net Income
a. Your primary practice	$ _____.00
b. Your secondary practice (if applicable)	$ _____.00
c. Other income from dentistry (i.e., teaching, research, other practice, etc.)	$ _____.00

If you were in private practice as a **PRIMARY OCCUPATION** during 1986, please continue.

If you were **NOT** in private practice as a **PRIMARY OCCUPATION** during 1986, **DO NOT CONTINUE.** Please return the questionnaire. Thank you.

ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE CHARACTERISTICS

10. **INCLUDING YOURSELF,** please indicate the number of full- or part-time **DENTIST POSITIONS** in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986. (If none, enter zero.)

	Number of Dentist Positions
a. Number of **OWNER** dentists (i.e., sole proprietor, partners, or shareholders)	_____
b. Number of **NON-OWNER** dentists (i.e., employed dentists, associates and non-shareholders) If none, enter zero	_____

11. Please indicate the number of full-time (32 hours per week or more) and part-time (less than 32 hours per week) **EMPLOYEE POSITIONS** in the **PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986. (If none, enter zero.)

	Number of Employee Positions	
	full-time	part-time
a. Dental hygienist(s)	_____	_____
b. Chairside assistant(s)	_____	_____
c. Secretary/receptionist(s)*	_____	_____
d. Dental laboratory technician(s)	_____	_____
e. Bookkeeper, business personnel	_____	_____
f. Other, please specify _____	_____	_____

***NOTE:** A secretary or receptionist who also provides chairside assistance at least 50% of the time should be counted as a chairside assistant.

12. Please provide the following for **EACH DENTAL HYGIENIST** in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986. If the practice did not employ someone in these positions, please check the appropriate box in the first column.

DENTAL HYGIENIST (S):	Not applicable (Please check boxes)	1986 ANNUAL Salary/ Commission (In dollars)	Weeks Worked in 1986	Hours Worked per Week	Length of Experience PRIOR to Employment in this Practice		Length of Employment in this Practice	
Position #1	☐	$ _____ per year	_____ weeks	_____ hours	_____ years	_____ months	_____ years	_____ months
Position #2	☐	$ _____ per year	_____ weeks	_____ hours	_____ years	_____ months	_____ years	_____ months
Position #3	☐	$ _____ per year	_____ weeks	_____ hours	_____ years	_____ months	_____ years	_____ months

13. Please provide the following regarding all dental hygienist(s) appointments and visits in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986:

The average number of:	Dental Hygienist(s)
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week primarily for hygienist(s) treatment	_____ appointments per week
b. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that were actually treated by all hygienist(s)	_____ visits per week

14. Please indicate the following regarding patient care by the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986:

The average number of:	Entire Practice
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week **(EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ appointments per week
b. **WALK-IN VISITS** per week that were treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero	_____ visits per week
c. **EMERGENCY VISITS** per week (i.e., no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero	_____ visits per week
d. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that were **ACTUALLY** treated **(EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ visits per week

15. Approximately what percentage of the patients who visited the primary practice in 1986:

	Entire Practice Patient Characteristics
a. were:	
14 years of age or younger	_____%
15 to 64 years of age	_____%
65 years of age or older	_____% TOTAL 100 %
b. were members of families whose annual income is estimated to be:	
under $10,000	_____%
$10,000 to 29,999	_____%
$30,000 or more	_____% TOTAL 100 %
c. were:	
covered by a private insurance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care	_____%
covered by a public assistance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care	_____%
not covered by an insurance program	_____% TOTAL 100 %
d. were members of a racial minority	_____%

16. During the entire year of 1986 indicate the **TOTAL** number of **DIFFERENT PATIENTS** treated by the **PRIMARY PRACTICE** _____ different patients

17. For the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986 how long did an average patient of record and average new patient have to **WAIT:**

	Entire Practice Waiting Time	
	patient of record	new patient
a. for the **INITIAL APPOINTMENT** of a series (excluding emergency cases)	_____ days	_____
b. to see a dentist **AFTER** the patient arrived for a **SCHEDULED** APPOINTMENT	_____ minutes	_____

18. In the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE**, what was the **total amount of fees charged** for the dental care provided during 1986 **(annual billing)**? $ _____.00

19. What percentage of the 1986 **GROSS RECEIPTS** were received: (If none, enter zero.)

	Gross Receipts
a. as direct patient payment	_____%
b. as payment from government programs (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, or other public insurance)	_____%
c. as direct payment from private insurance carriers	_____%
d. from other sources of payment (Please specify) _____	_____% TOTAL 100 %

20. During 1986, were any of the expenses of the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** (dental facilities or staff) shared with other dentists?

Yes 1
No 2

If you shared expenses (dental facilities or staff) with any other practice, please report **YOUR PRIMARY PRACTICE** expenses only.

21. For the following selected items, what were the **TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** for the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986? (If no expenses were incurred for specific items, please enter zero.)

	Expenses
a. Yearly rent	$ _____.00
b. Yearly mortgage (including interest)	$ _____.00
c. Total salaries, wages and commissions of non-dentists employees	$ _____.00
d. Commercial dental laboratory charges	$ _____.00
e. Dental supplies	$ _____.00
f. Advertising expenses	$ _____.00
g. Bad debts	$ _____.00

22. What were the **TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** of operating the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1986? $ _____.00 (This figure should be greater than the sum of the figures in question 21.)

Thank you for your assistance in this important research project. Please return this questionnaire by folding and place tape as indicated. Drop it in the mail.